

So I say it is the right thing to do. I have enjoyed being there, enjoyed meeting our troops. I do not want to do anything that would hurt them. But I am not one who believes we have to sit here and get a letter from General Wesley Clark and hide under the table. He did not get elected. He does not have the responsibility to make choices among health insurance, defense, and criminal justice, as we do. He does not have to go back to his voters and explain why it is in our critical national interest that their young men and women are committed around the globe, as we do.

I believe we can improve this commitment. I believe we can improve our effort in the world if we talk about these issues more openly. I believe this bill will lead us in that direction and I support it. I am proud to do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I do not want this issue to come up tomorrow at the markup on the defense bill, so I am doing this tonight so there is no misunderstanding.

Not long after visiting Joint Interagency Task Force East an learning of the lack of readiness in the maritime patrol aircraft fleet, I made a second trip to Joint Interagency Task Force West and Coast Guard Pacific Area to determine whether this was a nationwide problem, or simply a problem of resource allocation.

Unfortunately, what I learned is that the Coast Guard is in dire need of additional maritime patrol aircraft to backfill, supplement, and expand the Coast Guard capability to meet the many defense-related, drug interdiction, maritime enforcement and protection, and other aviation related missions.

This amendment, which has been cleared on both sides of the aisle, is a first step toward addressing this glaring deficiency in our operational readiness in Coast Guard maritime patrolling capability.

This amendment provides for the acquisition of six C-130J aircraft which will provide a unit size capability and allow the better allocation of all Coast Guard maritime patrol aircraft resources nationwide.

I send the amendment to the desk and ask that it be considered as part of the managers' package when it is presented.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I applaud the Stevens/Coverdell amendment submitted tonight by the Senator from Alaska, appropriating funds for six C-130Js for the Coast Guard. Senator STEVENS knows first hand of the Coast Guard's need for additional maritime patrol aircraft to meet the multiple aviation missions with which they are tasked. Through my close work with the Coast Guard and their efforts in our nation's war on drugs, I

have also seen the need for these planes.

In 1998, Senator DEWINE and I introduced the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act which restored a balanced drug control strategy by renewing our nation's commitment to international drug eradication and interdiction efforts. A crucial component of this strategy is the work the Coast Guard performs in guarding America's shores from drug dealers. One of the many areas the Coast Guard identified as needing improvement to fulfill this mission was their maritime patrol aircraft fleet. Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Loy said, in reference to the demands placed on the C-130 "We've lost a full 25 percent or our availability while piling on additional mission requirements." It should also be noted that the Coast Guard flies their C-130s a third more hours than do the military services each year and the services own significantly more C-130s than the Coast Guard does.

Mr. President, the Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act passed the Congress just two years ago and now, through this amendment Senator DEWINE and I have cosponsored with Senator STEVENS, we are seeing the fruits of that effort. I am pleased to see that Congress is working to help the Coast Guard meet its many missions, particularly its efforts to end the scourge of illegal drugs plaguing this country.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, yesterday, the United States Senate took a procedural vote on Senator DASCHLE's amendment to S. 2521, the military construction appropriations bill. Senator DASCHLE lost this procedural vote by 42-54.

I did not support the Daschle amendment at that time because it was a procedural amendment to an unrelated bill. This unrelated Daschle amendment kept the Senate away all day from the important business of the military construction appropriations bill. In addition, it appeared that the Daschle amendment might indefinitely delay consideration of this important bill. As chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I have a responsibility to secure passage of the important military construction appropriations bill. This bill provides critically needed funding for military construction projects, improves the quality of life for the men and women who are serving our country in the armed forces, and sustains the readiness of our armed forces. These areas are traditionally underfunded, and this bill provides the necessary funds to help make up for this shortfall. For these reasons, I did not support the Daschle amendment when it came before me on a procedural vote on May 16, 2000.

Subsequent to the procedural vote on the Daschle amendment on May 16, 2000, Senators LOTT and DASCHLE reached an agreement to have two up or down votes—one on the aforementioned Daschle amendment and an-

other on an amendment to be offered by Senator LOTT. Under the agreement, debate on the amendments was limited by a time agreement.

Once this leadership agreement was reached, it became apparent that the Daschle amendment would no longer indefinitely delay the military construction appropriations bill. Therefore, my previous objections to this amendment were no longer relevant.

The Daschle amendment is a sense-of-the-Senate amendment. After stating a number of findings, the amendment states, among other things, that it is the sense of the Senate that "Congress should immediately pass a conference report to accompany" the juvenile justice bill that includes the Senate passed gun-related provisions.

During the Senate's debate of the juvenile justice bill in May of 1999, I supported the Lautenberg amendment, and other amendments to close the gun show loophole in the Brady act. I also supported an amendment to require licensed firearm dealers to provide a secure gun storage or safety device when a handgun is sold, delivered or transferred. Unfortunately, the juvenile justice bill has been locked in a House and Senate conference committee.

I remain firm in my stance on these issues. I certainly hope that House and Senate conferees can reach an agreement in conference on the juvenile justice bill. And I will continue to support the common sense gun provisions that passed the Senate during the juvenile justice debate. I believe the Senate passed gun-related amendments to the juvenile justice bill will help keep guns out of the hands of convicted felons and increase public safety without infringing on the rights of law-abiding citizens. Therefore, when it became clear that the Daschle amendment would not indefinitely delay consideration of the military construction appropriations bill, I supported this amendment.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING ROD DEHAVEN

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, it is a great honor for me to represent the people of South Dakota in the United States Senate. On occasion, I have the opportunity to recognize individual South Dakotans for their accomplishments, and, today, it brings me great pleasure to focus the attention of everyone in this chamber on one of South Dakota's most talented and determined athletes.

Rod DeHaven, a native of Huron, South Dakota, and a graduate of South Dakota State University, won the U.S.